



mosquito

representative species

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Arthropoda
Class:	Insecta
Order:	Diptera
Family:	Culicidae

Features

Mosquitoes undergo complete metamorphosis (egg, larva, pupa, adult). The larvae of some species hang upside down from the water's surface, extending an abdominal breathing tube to obtain oxygen. The larvae of other species lack a breathing tube and spend much time at the surface. The adult has long, narrow wings with scales along the wing veins and wing margins. The hind wings are small, knobbed structures. The male has very hairy antennae but the female's antennae have only a few hairs. The adults are one-fifth to one-fourth inch long.

Natural History

Mosquito larvae and pupae live in the still or stagnant water of ponds, marshes, lakes, tree holes, and containers with water. The larva is a scavenger, eating algae, microscopic animals, and debris. The female feeds on blood, but the male eats nectar and plant sap. The female lays floating eggs in a group in water, or near water where they will hatch when flooded.

Habitats

Mississippi River; Missouri River; interior rivers and streams; natural lakes and prairie marshes; wet prairies and fens; bottomland forests; constructed lakes, ponds, and reservoirs; temporary water supplies

Iowa Status

common; native

Iowa Range

statewide

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.